

# Connecticut Recycles Day - November 15

## Event Planners Guide



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[www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecycles.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecycles.htm)

**Connecticut Recycles Day, November 15**, is a national recycling awareness day. The purpose of the day is to increase participation in local recycling programs and to raise awareness about the related issues of composting, reuse, waste reduction, buying products made from recycled materials and the positive impact of recycling on reducing global warming.

Connecticut Recycles Day is sponsored by the Connecticut Recyclers Coalition (CRC), a non-profit, 501(c)-3 organization affiliated with the National Recycling Coalition. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) supports CRC in its efforts by providing information and resources for event planners and participants. For more information on Connecticut Recycles Day and America Recycles Day, see [www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecyday.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecyday.htm), [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org) and [www.ctrecyclers.org](http://www.ctrecyclers.org).

This guide has been prepared to help you with ideas for events at school, work or in your community. It will also answer some questions you may have about Connecticut Recycles Day or America Recycles Day.

### **Hold A Promise Card Drive: An Easy Way To Celebrate Connecticut Recycles Day**

If you can't plan a special event, an easy way to celebrate the day is to hold a promise card drive. (A copy of the card can be downloaded from the DEP website listed above.) All you need is a good location, a few volunteers, a table, pens, promise cards and something to collect them in.

The purpose of the card is to have individuals make a promise to either improve their recycling or to try something new like composting and to encourage others to do the same. The "promise" side of the card has a place for a signature and can be cut off from the part of the card that is used for the national prize drawings. Behavioral studies have shown that people who sign their names feel more committed to following through on what they said they would do. The paper also serves as a reminder of the promise. This year, we are asking the signer commit to telling two people about the importance of recycling. Again, studies have shown that if there is personal appeal to do something, you are more likely to do it. (Think about getting a phone call from a friendly volunteer asking you to donate blood.) You can also fill out a promise card (also called pledge card) on line at [www.americarecyclesday.org](http://www.americarecyclesday.org)

You might also consider printing the "promise" on a poster-size or larger piece of paper and displaying it in a prominent place at your event so that event participants can sign their names on it to show their personal commitment to recycling.

### **Recycling And Global Warming**

When we think about global warming we really have to look at the big picture. The earth's climate is getting warmer in part because of "greenhouse gases" created by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas. We rely on fossil fuels for our cars, factories, utilities and homes and for manufacturing and distributing products we use every day. But burning more and more of these fuels is releasing large quantities of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide into the atmosphere. By practicing the 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle), we use fewer natural resources, create less pollution and breathe healthier air. In fact, one of the recommendations in the recently published *Connecticut Climate Change Stakeholder Dialogue* is to increase recycling in the State to 40%, so the 3 R's are more important than ever.

Although the activities listed in the "Reduce Global Warming" section are not typical themes for events, you might creatively incorporate them into yours to get people thinking about that "big picture". For instance, at your promise card drive you could distribute flyers for RideShare or in addition to providing information about recycling items in your town, you might also let them know about the Energy Star website. If students collect deposit cans for recycling, the money could be put towards purchasing a tree for the school.

For more information about global warming, please visit [www.ctclimatechange.com](http://www.ctclimatechange.com) and <http://yosemite.epa.gov/oar/globalwarming.nsf/content/index.html>

## WAYS TO CELEBRATE CONNECTICUT RECYCLES DAY

Listed below are ideas about how teachers, schools, businesses and individuals can participate in Connecticut Recycles Day as well as other opportunities to incorporate recycling into every day life! It's fun and easy and will make for a healthier more sustainable environment.

### REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE

#### ❖ **Technotrash Collection**

**Good for schools, workplace, civic groups**

Organize an event to collect VHS/CD/DVD/audio cassette/computers/empty ink jet and toner cartridges/cell phones/CDRW/jewel cases/pagers/PDAs. GreenDisk will recycle all of these items. Go to their website at [www.greendisk.com](http://www.greendisk.com) for details.

#### ❖ **No Waste Meals**

**Grade: Any, also great for families and the workplace**

The goal is to have no excess garbage, food or otherwise. This can be measured within a school system by janitors who empty the trash as well as volunteers who "monitor" the ORT (waste) amount, to be creative if this is an ongoing project there can be a bulletin board with the daily/weekly/monthly "ORT report" (keeping track of the amount of waste), the grade/lunch table/individual with the least amount of waste can receive a prize. Encourage participants to only take as much food as they can eat in one sitting and to bring in reusable lunch bags and utensils as well as food without packaging such as fruit or chips in reusable containers as opposed to a plastic bag. To take it one step further, the food waste that is acquired could be used to start a compost pile for the school.

#### ❖ **Look into your school's recycling program!**

**Grade: Any**

What is being done to recycle at your school? Can you improve on anything and can you volunteer to help recycle? Look into it and get recycling!

#### ❖ **Buckets from Bulk Products BONUS!**

**Grade: Any**

Encourage purchasing products in bulk, such as snack foods, dried fruit, condiments, sauces, etc. especially if the product comes in a bucket (any size will do). When the food item has run out, use the bucket as a planter by decorating it with latex paint and plant your favorite flower, herb, fruit or vegetable. You're not only recycling, but you can add color to an area and enjoy having your favorite plant around.

#### ❖ **Game Time**

**Grade: 5-8**

Expose students to a book or video entitled "Affluenza, The costs of over consumption and materialism." Check your local library as well as the Internet for the book and/or video. After discussing the issues, have students create a game out of recycled materials, like old cardboard from boxes, scrap paper, game pieces from other games that aren't played with (be creative). The object of the game should be to acquire the least amount of materialistic possessions by reducing, reusing and recycling, with possible "bonus points" for things like helping out in the community. The games should be easy enough for a young child to be played because when the students are finished with them, they could be donated to local day care centers and kindergarten classrooms for rainy day activities. That way you can pass the message along to younger kids. For more information on "Affluenza" go to <http://www.pbs.org/kets/affluenza/>.

❖ **“Floppies for Kiddies Organization”**

**Grade: Any**

Donate floppy disks to Floppies for Kiddies, an organization that recycles and reformats floppies, then forwards them to schools, rehabilitation centers and senior centers in need (with older computers) across the U.S. It doesn't matter what type of floppy it is (Macintosh or IBM-compatible) they will take as many disks as you are willing to donate. Mail disks to: Floppies for Kiddies, 20349 Hwy. 36, Covington, LA 70433

For more information: <http://electronics.exchangesystem.net/trade/aa016853.html>

❖ **Rejuvenate Old Clothing**

**Grade: 3-8**

Tie-dye old worn out clothing and towels that may be stained or damaged. Not only will the stain be camouflaged, but also the students will recycle their old belongings into something “bright and new” to wear. Also encourage students with younger siblings or cousins to bring in clothes they've outgrown and worn in to be rejuvenated and passed down.

For more information go to: <http://iaia.essortment.com/tiedyedyefermel.htm> and for information on natural dyes [http://innerself.com/Herbs/Herb\\_And\\_Plant\\_Dyes.htm](http://innerself.com/Herbs/Herb_And_Plant_Dyes.htm)

❖ **Re-stuffable Pillows**

**Grade: 5-8**

Find any pillow pattern, and old piece of fabric such as old clothing, curtains, sheets etc. that is big enough so that you can create pillows out of it. Instead of sewing the pillow all the way around, leave one of the ends open by attaching a zipper to it so that when the pillow begins to deflate you can add more stuffing to it. If it gets dirty you can remove the stuffing to wash it and re-stuff when clean! The pillow will never be flat! Tip: use old nylons as stuffing; just cut them up before hand into long strips and scrunch.

For more pillow ideas go to: <http://www.allcrafts.net/sewing.htm#freeprojects>

❖ **“Foster New Beginnings”**

**Grade: Any**

Contact your local foster family agency to see if they will accept used luggage as a gift to help kids move into new homes without transporting their belongings in paper or plastic bags. It will make their moving experience a lot more enjoyable and your old luggage will be used to help others instead of become garbage. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) <http://www.state.ct.us/dcf/> will accept luggage in good condition. You can get more information about the facility on the website or you can drop off your luggage at the DCF Office located at 364 West Middle Turnpike in Manchester CT, the main entrance is in the back next door to “MARC” there is a little red roof and you can leave the luggage downstairs with a security guard.

❖ **Camera...Action**

**Grade: Any**

If your town has a local cable access channel why not get the recycling message across by creating a news documentary or short play to inform the public of why recycling and conservation is so important. Be creative and come up with a script and costumes, show all of your friends that you were on TV and get them involved with recycling as well.

❖ **Hold a book swap or sale**

**Grade: Any**

This is easily coordinated with a reading program at schools. Children bring in books and receive a ticket for each donated book. They then can use the tickets to “shop” for “new” books. In a business setting, you can ask people to donate books and then hold a tag sale of books. The money earned could be donated to a charity chosen by your employees.

❖ **Collect reusable items for charity**

**Grade: Any**

Contact local charities before you start collecting to make certain that you have a home for collected items. In the fall, collect items like coats, mittens and hats may be useful to local social service agencies. Your local dog pound or animal shelter may be able to use old sheets, towels and blankets.

❖ **Visit one of Connecticut's Trash Museums**

**Grade: Any**

These museums provide tours free of charge to both youth and adult groups. They are located in Hartford, 211 Murphy Road (860) 247-4280 and in Stratford at 1410 Honeyspot Road (203) 386-9755. You can also go to their website at: <http://www.crra.org/education.html>.

❖ **Sponsor a contest**

**Grade: Any**

Have your students design recycling posters, bookmarks or sculptures from "found" materials. You could choose essays or poems about recycling or even a song or rap designed to promote recycling for students who don't draw. Invite parents in to see a display showcasing student talent.

❖ **Collect deposit cans and bottles**

**Grade: Any**

Collect deposit cans and use the money for a special school project or donate it to a worthy cause.

❖ **Host a recycling-related display**  
**groups**

**Good for schools, workplace, municipalities, civic**

Businesses may utilize the employee cafeteria or lobby. Local municipalities may want to take advantage of space in the local library, town hall or community center. Displays may be borrowed from the DEP or you may want to design your own to highlight the provisions and accomplishments of your own recycling program. Visit the website at <http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/recycres.htm>

❖ **The Gift of Sight**

**Good for schools or workplace**

Donate old eyeglasses to the Gift of Sight Program run by Lions Clubs throughout the U.S. and Canada in conjunction with Lens Crafters. You can also drop your glasses off at any Lens Crafters store, call your local Lions Club or call 800-74-SIGHT.

❖ **Host a "Green Meeting" or "Green Event"**

**Good for the home or workplace**

Instead of using invitations, save paper and money and invite your guests via telephone or e-mail if very informal. If you have a choice where to hold the event, try to find a place that is centrally located or accessible by mass transit so your guests can carpool. Instead of having plastic and paper your next catered meeting, request silverware and china plates so that they can be washed and reused or just minimize the use of disposables. Incorporate other ways to reduce waste, like bite size sandwiches so no utensils are needed and providing pitchers so individual cans and bottles are not needed, but then don't forget to only take as much food as you can eat so you don't waste food products either. Lastly recycle! Make sure recycling receptacles are located next to trashcans and clearly labeled. For more information on green event planning go to the DEP *P2 View* newsletter at [www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/p2/](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/p2/) or [www.bridgingthegap.org/pdfs/Green%20Event%20Manual.pdf](http://www.bridgingthegap.org/pdfs/Green%20Event%20Manual.pdf).

❖ **Encourage reuse in your employee cafeteria**

**Good for the workplace**

Have the cafeteria provide reduced priced coffee and other beverages for people who bring their own reusable mugs.

**Cookies and Community Awareness**

**Good for Girl/Boy Scout Troops**

We all know and love that time of year when Girl and Boy Scout troops go around selling those beloved cookies, but why not have an added bonus? After you've gotten your customer to buy a few boxes of yummy treats also hand out a fact sheet about recycling that you have prepared just to make them aware of issues and ways that they can reduce, reuse and recycle. This way you'll not only be selling cookies, but hopefully opening people's eyes to ways that they can recycle. (In the Hartford area cookie selling begins officially on November 1, 2004.)

❖ **Donate your old computer to someone who can use it**      **Great for anyone**

The National Cristina Foundation is a non-profit organization located in Greenwich, CT that accepts donations of used computers. The way this works is that you enter your information about where you are located and the computer equipment you would like to donate on the NCF website which is <http://www.cristina.org/index.html>. They then take your information and pair it up with a local charity or school in need in your community and then the exchange takes place from there!

❖ **Participate in an "I Buy Different" Campaign or start a group**      **Great for Young Adults**

Learn about some kids that are really making a difference by "being different" and practicing environmentally friendly ways to live on this website <http://www.ibuydifferent.org/>.

## **COMPOSTING**

❖ **Start composting at your school or business or host a composting workshop**

Start composting all lunchtime food scraps. There is also an electronic how-to manual for schools that would like to start composting. It can be downloaded from the DEP website at [www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/compost/comindex.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/compost/comindex.htm). CT DEP also has videos and brochures available that can be used as part of an educational workshop for adults.

## **CONSERVING WATER**

◆ **Hang on! That water is still good!**

**Great for everyone**

The water that drains off of buildings during rain storms can be a very good source of usable water, place a barrel of sorts underneath the spout of a rain gutter so that the next time it rains you can collect the rain water and use it to water plants or wash your pet with, same goes for leftover water after draining pasta. Recycle and use that water for washing your dishes when you are done eating, or water small houseplants, that way you won't be wasting. For more information, you can visit [www.watersavers.com/docs/rainbarrel\\_main.shtml?k=rainbarrel](http://www.watersavers.com/docs/rainbarrel_main.shtml?k=rainbarrel).

## REDUCE GLOBAL WARMING

### ❖ Plant plants!

**Grade: Any**

Plant a couple of additional trees around your home or school or church or wherever there is room because trees reduce the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) by 20 pounds per year. For more information about trees and global climate change visit: [www.arboday.org](http://www.arboday.org) and [www.treetures.com](http://www.treetures.com).

### ❖ Walk, bike, bus or hike!

**Great for every one**

Leave your car home for two days a week, ride a bike to work or to the store, walk to church or carpool where you need to go. The carbon dioxide reduction from just leaving the car off for two days a week is an astonishing 1,590 lbs per year! For more information about carpooling or biking to work go to [www.rideshare.com/van.html](http://www.rideshare.com/van.html), [www.commutersregister.com](http://www.commutersregister.com) and <http://www.crcog.org/bicycle/bicycle.htm>.

### ❖ Purchase Energy Star products if you need new appliances

If you replace your home's refrigerator with high efficiency model you reduce 320 lbs per year of carbon dioxide from reaching earth's atmosphere. If you replace your current washing machine with a low-energy, low-water-use machine the carbon dioxide reduction is 440 lbs per year. For more information, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

### ❖ Looking to buy a new car?

You can greatly reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 5,600 lbs per year when you purchase a fuel-efficient car (rated at 32 mpg or more) to replace your most frequently used automobile! Starting Oct 1, 2004, hybrid passenger cars with an EPA rating of 40 mpg or better are exempt from CT sales tax. In addition, there are federal tax deductions on the purchase of hybrid cars. For more information, visit [www.hybridcars.com](http://www.hybridcars.com).

### ❖ Start an Anti-Idling Campaign

**Great for any one who drives**

Instead of letting those cars run while waiting in line at the drive through or waiting to pick up a friend or family member turn off your cars and stop wasting gas and emitting harmful toxins into the atmosphere. To start an Anti-Idling Campaign please visit this website [http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/idling/tool\\_kit/artwork.cfm?PrintView=N&Text=N](http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/idling/tool_kit/artwork.cfm?PrintView=N&Text=N)

The listing or any organization in the above activities is there for informational purposes only and is not a complete list or an endorsement by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

Visit the Recycling and Pollution Prevention Home pages at [www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecycles.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecycles.htm) and [www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/p2/index.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/p2/index.htm) for more information.



## CONNECTICUT RECYCLES DAY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***Who should celebrate?*** Everyone! In Connecticut, recycling for 11 items is mandatory, so everyone should be recycling at home, at school, at work and away from home. Events to promote recycling are held annually at schools, businesses, municipal offices, state agencies and non-profits every year.

***We already celebrate Earth Day, why should we do Recycles Day too?*** Many schools and even some businesses celebrate both days. Earth Day (April 22) and America Recycles Day (November 15) are about 6 months apart so that they reinforce each other. It is especially effective for schools to use America Recycles Day as an opportunity get new students to participate in their school's recycling program early in the year. On Earth Day there are many other environmental issues that may take center stage and not leave a lot of time to focus on recycling.

***My town has had a recycling program for a dozen years and I recycle, why the continued emphasis?*** Although recycling may seem routine for many people, as the composition of our waste stream changes, so must what our recycling programs collect. Electronics is probably the best example of this. As recently as ten years ago collections for used electronics were unheard of. Today, many municipalities are sponsoring collection programs for used computers, TVs and cell phones that not only add weight and volume to the waste stream but also contain many toxic components like lead. Also people need to be reminded how to prepare materials for recycling properly.

***What do I need to do to hold my own event?*** We ask that all event organizers fill out an event registration form and send it in to CRC. Your event will then be put on the national electronic listing.

***What do I do with the Promise Cards after I have collected them?*** All cards collected in Connecticut are sent to Signature Marketing, 134 West Street, Simsbury, CT 06070. Completed cards must be postmarked no later than November 15, 2005 and received by November 19, 2005. All entries are sent to the National Steering Committee to be included in the drawing for national prizes.

***Do I have to use the official "promise card"?*** No, you may pledge on-line at the national website to save paper, or you may use any type of scrap paper- an old envelope, a piece of a grocery bag, etc. Just make certain that you provide your full name, a daytime phone number and whether or not you are under 18 or over 18. Entries without this information are not eligible for the drawing.

***How are national prizes awarded?*** The drawing for prizes is completely random. Because you can only submit one card per person, all entries have an equal chance of winning.

***How can I get involved even if I don't host an event?***

- Contact your local Department of Public Works to make certain that you are recycling everything that you can.
- When you contact your town, ask about any special collections for electronics or household hazardous waste.
- Start composting. Visit the CT DEP website for more information [www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecycles.htm](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/recycle/ctrecycles.htm)
- Make certain that your place of work is in compliance with state recycling law.
- When you are away from home, for example, at a mall food court, make certain that you recycle the same items that you recycle at home.